

Alzheimer Society of Ontario Welcomes Health Canada Approval of New Test for Alzheimer's Disease Detection

Cerebrospinal fluid assays offer more accessible approach for detecting protein buildup, suggesting presence of Alzheimer's disease

Toronto, ON, June 8 2023—The Alzheimer Society of Ontario is encouraged by today's Health Canada approval of three biomarker tests developed by Roche Diagnostics to detect indicators of Alzheimer's disease pathology. The tests are an additional, less costly option for health care providers and families to gain information and make advanced care decisions with greater certainty.

"With over 275,000 Ontarians living with dementia today—and three times that number within the next 30 years—Ontario needs new and innovative options for detecting and diagnosing Alzheimer's disease," said Cathy Barrick, CEO of the Alzheimer Society of Ontario. "We hope today's approval marks the beginning of scientific breakthroughs leading to timely, reliable, inexpensive, and less-invasive diagnostic options."

Today's announcement marks the latest in a series of positive news in Alzheimer's disease research. In the span of six months, the US has approved a promising treatment for Alzheimer's disease, that same therapy (lecanemab) has been submitted for Health Canada approval, and a separate treatment, donanemab, reported positive phase three trial results. These successive stories are giving families in Ontario hope that, soon and for the first time ever, they will have access to not just one but multiple treatment options for Alzheimer's disease.

But Ontario is not ready.

"Researchers and industry have done their part, and ground-breaking detection and treatment options will soon be coming to market. It is now up to provincial and territorial governments to not only fund these breakthrough products, but prepare for their arrival," continued Ms. Barrick. "Ministries of Health across the country must act now to update their standards, practices, and billing codes so we are ready to take advantage of new technologies as soon as they become available."

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About the Alzheimer Society of Ontario

The Alzheimer Society is a federation of 26 frontline community support service providers, operating in every community across Ontario. We supported over 95,000 clients last year, including both care partners and people living with dementia. We provide education and training to physicians and other health care professionals, as well as to the general public, and work to reduce the stigma that is far too often associated with dementia. As a health service provider, we offer system navigation, care partner respite, adult day programs, therapeutic recreation, and so much more at little or, for nearly all of our programs, no cost to families. With hundreds of staff and thousands of volunteers we seek to alleviate the personal and social consequences of Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia, and to promote research into a cure. Learn more and find an Alzheimer Society near you:

<https://alzheimer.ca/on/en/about-us/find-your-local-alzheimer-society>

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Alzheimer Society of Ontario staff are available for media interviews in English and French.